DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 068 245 RC 006 529

AUTHOR	Hillery, George A., Jr.
TITLE	Social Structure and Resistance to Change.
PUB DATE	Aug 72
NOTE	37p.; Paper prepared for Third World Congress for Rural Sociology (Baton Rouge, Louisiana, August 1972)
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS	*American Indian Culture; Catholics; *Changing Attitudes; Community Study; *Comparative Analysis; Cross Cultural Studies; *Religious Cultural Groups; Rural Population; *Social Structure
IDENTIFIERS	*Navajos; Trappist Monks

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the research is to extract as many common factors as possible which are associated with resistance to change. Two peoples are selected for study, the Navajo Indians and the Trappist monks, both of which are rural and have an extensive history spanning at least several centuries, but which differ radically otherwise. The 2 major perspectives used are cultural and communal. The author's personal contact with both of these people has extended over more than 2 years--living 3 months with the Navajos (in Many Farms, Arizona) in 1965 and 2 months in one of the many monasteries in the United States. Both peoples show that rural "Gemeinschaftlich" systems can exist effectively with industrial technology. Material traits show the least resistance to change, ideas and values the most. Resistance is selective among both peoples. From the cultural perspective, the core to resistance is found in the religious, sexual-familial, and language systems. The communal perspective also includes the sexual-familial systems, and in addition, spatial factors (particularly isolation) and cooperation--all of which show resistance to change. Both peoples lack conflict-regulating mechanisms, and this is also seen as a factor in resistance. Women are more conservative than men in both cases. The suggested rank-order of importance of these factors in resistance to change is as follows: religion, sex, language, space, and cooperation. These 5 factors emerged as most conspicuous from the comparison study of the 2 rural peoples. (Author/FF)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

RECEIVED
NOV 27 1972
NMSU
E.R.I.C.

ED 068245

Social Structure and Resistance to Change

George A. Hillery, Jr.

ABSTRACT

Two peoples are selected for study, the Navajo Indians and the Trappist monks, both of which are rural and have an extensive history, spanning at least several centuries, but which differ radically otherwise. Two major perspectives are used: cultural and communal. The purpose of the research is to extract as many common factors as possible which are associated with resistance to change.

Both peoples show that rural Gemeinschaftlich systems can exist effectively with industrial technology. Material traits generally show the least resistance to change, ideas and values the most. Resistance is selective among both peoples. From the cultural perspective, the core to resistance is found in the religious, sexual-familial, and language systems. The communal perspective also includes the sexual-familial systems, and in addition, spatial factors (particularly isolation) and cooperation--all of which show resistance to change. Both peoples lack conflict-regulating mechanisms, and this is also seen as a factor in resistance. Women are more conservative than men in both cases.

The suggested rank-order of importance of these factors in resistance to change is as follows: Religion, sex, language, space, and cooperation. These factors are not the only resistants--they were merely those common to these otherwise widely divergent rural peoples.

The importance of religion stresses again the importance of ideas, of values and attitudes, as being more resistant to change than overt behavior, such as the use of material traits. Parsons' hypothesis of the cybernetic principle of social change is seen to be confirmed.

FILMED FROM BEST AVAILABLE COPY

RC 006529

SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND RESISTANCE TO CHANGE*

George A. Hillery, Jr.

Virginia Polytechnic Institute

and State University

Too often are studies of social change limited to a few years or even a few decades. Any student of history, however, knows that the consequences of social change may take centuries to become manifest. In order to maximize the time span in which the consequences of social change can be observed, two social systems are to be discussed, both of which have historical beginnings which can be traced back at least for several centuries. Archaeological evidence for the presence of the Navajo in what is now the western United States has been dated as early as the sixteenth century (Kluckhon and Leighton, 1962). The Trappist monks trace their origins to St. Benedict in the sixth century, although significant changes (enough to raise questions of identity) occurred in the eleventh and the eighteenth centuries.

These two cultures were selected for several other reasons. First, they are both rural and essentially communal, and thus both are directly pertinent to the concerns of this Congress. Second, they are both cultures

---

*Paper to be read before the Third World Congress for Rural Sociology, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, U.S.A., August, 1972. Acknowledgement is made to the several Trappist monks who have read and critiqued the manuscript. Final responsibility for all statements, however, rests with the author.

with which the author himself has had extended personal contact. Third, within these similarities, the two cultures are radically different, a fact which can be put to important use. Comments on each of these points follows.

That both are rural systems means also that they both are related to an area of sociology in which I am most comfortable, the study of communal organizations. Generally, I have not been involved in studies of social change because the data were lacking, and so I have concentrated on the existing structures of society. Nevertheless, one cannot avoid implications of change forever, and accordingly, admitting the many dangers, a few exploratory ventures are to be made here.

The method of science includes induction as a basic if not a cardinal procedure. When working in an area in which one is theoretically unfamiliar, it is best to at least be familiar with the subject matter. (For all of our efforts, sociology is still unfamiliar with the study of social change. Witness only the problems raised by Sorokin (1937-41), problems that have by no means been overcome. Cf. Cuzzort, 1969.) My personal contact with both of these people has extended over more than two years for each. I began visits to the Navajo Indian Reservation in 1963 and spent three months living with Navajos (in Many Farms, Arizona) in 1965. My visits to Trappist monasteries began in 1966, and I have now lived in one particular monastery for a total time of approximately two months. All of the monasteries to be studied are located in the United States (since the study of the monasteries is still in process and since conclusions are quite tentative, the site in which the participant observation is being made is not revealed.)

The essential methodological strategy in preparing the following observations has been to choose two rural peoples that are as widely divergent as possible, given the other limitations that have been discussed. By working with such a selection, the observations that are made will most probably pertain to a much larger range of systems than would be the case if the two were more similar. For example, the two cultures have radically different sexual systems. One is quite casual, with fertility levels among the highest ever recorded (Hillery, 1966); the other is severely restricted in that it is celibate. Even more important, therefore, is the fact that one of the major sources of resistance to change is to be found in both types of sexual customs. These two widely divergent situations are thus used in a manner approximating that of limiting cases: whatever a comparison reveals to be common to both must necessarily pertain to many other systems, precisely because they stand at extreme and opposite points on such a range of behavior.

There are of course numerous problems raised by this approach. First, because there was no sociology in the modern sense whereby the beginnings (or even the early periods) of these peoples could be observed, much of significance is lost. We are limited to a large extent to what is now available, and the past in both cases must be regarded essentially as something which has produced what we now have. For the Navajo, much of our reasoning must be conjectural. There is little in the way of Navajo history, for example, before they came into contact with Western record-keeping systems. For the Trappist, the collection of data is of course much better, since these are highly literate people and have left extensive historical records (going back to The Holy Rule of St. Benedict of the sixth century.)

Finally, only two systems will be discussed. For both of these last reasons,--the lack of an earlier sociological base line and the lack of more cases, the present discussion is intended to do no more than to raise questions and to suggest various topics that may be useful to explore in future research.

Two major perspectives are used in the discussion: cultural and communal. By a cultural perspective I mean simply symbolic human behavior that can be analyzed without necessarily referring to any specific social system. In the present analysis, religion can be seen to most clearly fit this description. Though one must admit that the separation between culture and society is never complete, the separation is nevertheless a common analytic practice. (See also Hillery, 1968:96.)

By a communal perspective I mean one that must take note of specific collections of people that can be identified in time and space, that have a recognizable set of institutions, and (for our purposes) that emphasize norms relating to familial and cooperative behavior (cf. Hillery, 1963, 1968, 1971).

The purpose in making this separation is to emphasize the social nature of resistance to change. Religious behavior will be seen to figure heavily in the discussion, and given the aforementioned abstract nature of religion, it would be possible to ignore the institutional patterns of behavior in specific social situations. Yet to emphasize the social structure at the expense of the religious belief would be an equally crucial omission.

The discussion is organized such that resistance to change is treated separately for each of the two peoples: the Navajos, followed

by the Trappists. Then the two people are compared directly. Following this, an attempt is made to relate the observations to other social theories.

A word concerning value orientation also appears to be in order (and this is addressed no less to professionals than to the people being studied). The concept of "resistance to change" may carry with it something of a negative connotation, as something to be avoided or overcome. No such implication is intended here. Indeed, as the author has studied these peoples, he sees some indication that perhaps through selective resistance they have preserved not only a measure of integrity but their very being.

Resistance to change among the Navajo. The Navajo Indians show an interesting combination of openness to change and apparent stubborn resistance. As one lives among these people, he becomes amazed at the extent to which modern American culture has penetrated the area. Automobiles now more than rival the horse and wagon. Even the large proportion of pickup trucks is probably no different than found in the rest of rural America. Many trading posts have shown a substantial metamorphosis into supermarkets, the radio is by no means an unusual occurrence, and similarly for electricity. Most Navajos are acquainted with western medicine through the free medical care that is available to them, and they have no hesitation in using it. Soda pop is as much in evidence as is coffee.

But one also knows that this is not Main Street, U. S. A. The language is markedly different. It has been said that the only way in which one can learn to speak the Navajo language (Athapascan) effectively is to be born among the Navajos. The clothing is different, if no more than the full skirts and velveteen blouses of the women and in the abundance of silver jewelry. And if churches are in evidence, only a casual inquiry

will show that these churches are almost never of the Navajos, though they may be (through missionaries) for them. Religion is as much a part of a Navajo as his food--perhaps more so. Although the obvious manifestation of his religion is in the various curing ceremonies (lasting from three to nine days and nights), his religion is practiced in an almost endless series of ritual observances, such as in getting up before the sun and in going to bed shortly after sunset, in refusing to point to anyone with his hands (the lips are preferred), in not eating bear meat, in not touching a tree or animal struck by lightening, and on and on through so much of his life that the Navajo himself is often unaware of the extent of his religious observances (Hill, 1938.) Indeed, if one asks a Navajo to describe his life, as often as not he will tell you of his religious practices.

But the difference from Anglo-American life is even more basic than language and religion. It probably begins in childrearing. What effect the practice of swaddling Navajo babies and binding them to a cradle board has on Navajo personality, I will leave for others to decide (Kluckhon, 1962), but I can attest that Navajo children are probably given the most permissive childrearing of any peoples on this continent. A child can do no wrong, or perhaps more appropriately, a child is put into a category whereby anything he does can be immediately forgiven. I have seen a two-year old desecrate a bag of sacred pollen by throwing it into the air, an act that indeed shocked all the adults around him. But it was the act that was shocking. Nothing whatever was done to the child, and the people went on with the ceremony as before.

This permissiveness extends until puberty and slightly beyond. The child experiments with sex as casually as he experiments with anything

else (allowing always for individual exceptions). And then the pregnancies come, and then the relatives begin questioning the girl: "who is the man?"

The result is two-fold. Some boys are forced to become husbands as a result of a "shot-gun" marriage. Others leave for elsewhere, becoming in effect wanderers, until approximately 40 years of age, when they usually decide to settle down.

The consequences of this change are rather traumatic for the adolescents. A few months before, they were as free as can be imagined. On the recognition of pregnancy, the girl must come to terms with her approaching motherhood. The boy must leave his parental home, either as a wanderer or as the son-in-law of a stranger, for these people are matrilocal as well as matrilineal. His father-in-law is in a situation that is equally difficult, for he is the patriarch on his wife's land, among his wife's people. This means that virtually any of his authority rests not so much in his formal possession of a right to rule as much as it does in his own personality. For this reason, the Navajo patriarch rules more by nondirective techniques than anything else, and extended Navajo households are constantly in the process of breaking down as older patriarchs die, and they are equally building up as newer ones gain power.*

There is, consequently, a potential for a high degree of tension in the Navajo households, especially among men. This tension is if anything

---

*Patriarchal power may receive emphasis through the institution of medicine. The medicine man gets wealth; Navajo norms prohibit his claiming this wealth for his own use; and so relatives gravitate to his camp to share his culturally-induced largess.

increased by the fact that open conflict among Navajos is to be avoided if at all possible (although of course conflict does occur). Understandably, the incidence of psychosomatic illness is high. When a man suffers pain (for the men are most often involved, as is understandable, since it is the man who suffers the most serious familial dislocations), he will approach his family for help in acquiring the services of a medicine man. Medicine men are expensive. They must be paid if their medicine is to be effective. His maternal family will come to his aid, and for some time his mother's people will be involved in securing the necessary resources and in obtaining the services of the medicine man. Word of this effort naturally comes to the father-in-law and the wife's people. Navajo medicine is essentially a curing ceremony; its center is the patient. And a patient ipso facto is to some degree a sacred being, because he is in contact with the gods--increasingly so as the ceremony proceeds. Events climax in a ceremony which often extends for nine days and nights, and for some period of time thereafter the patient is under something akin to a supernatural "after-glow."

The importance of this description can be seen in the way in which the patient's behavior in relation to his in-laws has necessarily been changed. If this relationship has been the source of his illness, then the source of the illness has been changed. Navajo medicine thus has an important influence on psychosomatic illness. This relationship is not intended to pertain to all of Navajo religion, but it is the function of a significant part of it. As can be seen, it is a highly effective system. Not surprisingly, the Navajo can point to his religion and say (obviously, as far as he is concerned), "it works."

If Navajo religion and kinship are mutually reinforcing, the same may be said for language. The Navajo religion depends heavily on the Navajo language, including the use of ritual prayers, songs, and archaic words. And Navajo kinship relations are difficult to conceptualize outside of the Navajo language. For example, anyone old enough to be my mother would be addressed by me as shimá, which can be literally translated as "my mother," except that the Navajo considers this to be one word. Someone else, speaking of the same woman in relation to me, would use the term bimá. For the Navajo, the term cannot be translated, for he has no concept of "he, she, or it" as being separable words (a point that continually makes translation confusing). Thus, I (as an Anglo-American) would translate bimá as "his, hers, or its mother." The Navajo would not.

Thus, the term for "woman" will include reference to her age, her potential relationship to the speaker, the speaker's age, and whether the speaker is doing the talking. (All of which ignores tone, which is as important to the Navajo as are vowels and consonants.)

The consequences of this are that the Navajo way of thinking about kinship structure is deeply embedded in his language and extends to all of his social relations, whether or not the kinship is biological, as Anglo-Americans and Europeans use the term. (For example, the usual greeting to a male stranger will include the term "sik'is," which literally translated means, "my cousin.") Language thus is a part of kinship structure.

It should be noted in passing that there is evidence that Navajo women are more conservative than are men, although there is little concept of male superiority, in spite of the patriarchies. The style of clothes of the women is at least a century old; men generally wear the usual garb of western American cattle country. The people are still

matriiineal and matrilocal. Food habits are in the hands of the women, and these remain unchanged in many important respects. Babies are still carried on cradle boards. The list could be extended.

One last point must be made that is quite important in understanding Navajo resistance to change, and that is the degree of their isolation. Located on the high and relatively arid Colorado plateaus, few persons ever penetrate deeply into Navajo country, primarily because of the lack of hard-surfaced roads. This isolation, however, is rapidly disappearing as the Navajo themselves build more roads and as their explosive population growth literally pushes them into contact with persons off of the reservation.

Thus, Navajo resistance to change was for some time at least not completely a thing of their own doing, since it was dependent on their physical isolation. But to perhaps a greater degree, the Navajo remain isolated still because of their kinship, religious, and linguistic structure, all effectively reducing communication with the outside. They are in this sense truly a sacred people, even in Becker's use of the term (Becker, 1950).

The influence of the white man's attempt at formal education remains unknown. Many if not most Navajo children can now speak English, although they prefer not to if adults are around, and most adults would rather speak Navajo. Whether the Navajo will go the way of such peoples as the Hutterites and the Jews is conjectural. These cultures have also been relatively isolated from the outside world by a mutually reinforcing language, religious, and kinship system, but they have been able to participate effectively in the outside world (if they so chose) because they have been literate. Each has also gone in different ways--the

Hutterites resisting change because of their religion (cf. Eaton, 1952); the Jews showing varying degrees of religious syncretism, depending to some extent on the degree of rejection they experience from the larger society (Berry, 1951:328-329).

The foregoing discussion has emphasized basically cultural reasons for Navajo resistance to change, although the social structure was necessarily involved. The emphasis, however, was on language, religion, kinship, and isolation, not on specific social systems. One may also turn to the social system of Navajo communities as sources of resistance to change. In discussing this source of change, I will use the communal model of the "vill" that has been developed elsewhere (Hillery, 1963, 1968): a localized system integrated by cooperation and families. (The model is more complicated and extensive than this; what is presented here are only the focal components.)

Some of these components already have been mentioned, particularly the spatial relationships (in the form of isolation) and the kinship structures. More specifically, it is significant that the Navajo live together in rather loose agglomerations of kinfolk, called "camps." Each camp will contain from several to several dozen dwelling structures and is isolated from other camps often by miles of unoccupied (uninhabited) land. This separation makes communication rather difficult--especially with non-Navajos. Further, most Navajo extended families have two or more camps in which they live as they move their sheep. The boundaries around the ancestral grazing lands are well-known by each family, though they are constantly shifting as the various families grow and decline, for the Navajos "own" land only by the extent to which they use it, and efforts by the Bureau of Indian Affairs to fence the range have met with indifference

and some opposition. (There has been occasional success, especially in connection with areas containing crops.)

The cooperative systems among the Navajo have met with a wide range of differential resistance, from virtually complete acceptance in the patterns of use and purchase of material goods to virtually no change in the patterns of mutual aid and contracts that occur in religious behavior. Notions of private property (apart from land) are in one sense quite compatible with Anglo-American customs, such that the Navajo have had no problem in buying the white man's goods. However, the Navajo are generally not as concerned as are white men with material things. He will allow religious ceremonials to take precedence over cultivation of crops or over buying a new automobile, for example. He is not as concerned with buying a tractor (I have never seen Navajos plowing with tractors, for example--not that they do not; only that it is rare), and in general he is not the best farmer. In the Navajo value system, religious behavior clearly has precedence.

Certain patterns of cooperation are still much in evidence in the religious ceremonials: the medicine man is paid, various persons help in the preparation of the religious "sand paintings," in the construction of masks, in the dancing; anyone who comes to a ceremonial must be fed, although relatives and friends are expected to contribute food to help defray the costs.

One other area should be mentioned that also contributes to the resistance to change on the part of the Navajo: their way of perceiving the world. Strangely, this way of perceiving is based on process rather than on categorization, and one would think that normally this mode of perception should leave them more amenable to change. Perhaps it does,

and perhaps for this reason the Navajo have been perfectly willing to accept new things (such as the white man's medicine) while firmly clinging to the old (such as their own religious medicine). In most probability, the difficulty lies in the fact that the Anglo-American host culture, from which most change emanates, is itself basically a culture which emphasizes categories, and the fact that the Navajo thought pattern emphasizes process simply serves as an additional isolating factor.

A brief anecdote may help to show this difference. On my last extended visit to the Navajo, I was attempting to relate Navajo community structure to their population change. Most simply, I wanted to find a Navajo community in which I could come to know each Navajo Indian personally, so that I would be able to know who moved into the area, who moved out of it, who died, and who gave birth. In essence, I wanted to be the Navajo's record-keeper, because I knew that the Navajo were not concerned with such things. (I have yet to meet an older Navajo, for example, who was certain of his age.) There is not a Western European or an Anglo-American yet who has failed to understand this problem. To those of us in this culture, it is simple--perhaps too simple. On the other hand, I have never yet been able to successfully explain this project to a Navajo, and I have tried on approximately 30 occasions--once for 24 hours!

The reason is probably again to be found in the language. The Navajo language is very rich in verbs and contains relatively few nouns. The Navajo does not think in terms of events. He thinks in terms of becoming and being. Thus it is incomprehensible for him to "count" such "things" as births, deaths, and migrations. He conceives of these as processes which go on and on, with other processes.

Accordingly, when a Navajo learns English and attends a white man's school, he may be able to speak with a white man, and the white man may think that he is communicating with the Navajo, but the two have probably met only at a very superficial level. The very thought processes are different.

In attempting a functional analysis of the foregoing traits (R. Merton, 1968), one is impressed by two things. First, all of these traits are mutually reinforcing, in one way or another (whether the relationship is functional or dysfunctional). But, second, it is difficult to interpret any of these relationships as manifest, as intended. The Navajo simply lives his life, accepting what changes seem acceptable, firmly and even at times unthinkingly resisting others. We have isolated areas that seem responsible for resistance to change. The Navajo would not do so. For him, all of life is of a piece, and this includes the supernatural. He is merely part of an on-going process. He finds the ways of the white man strange, and since the white man often insists that the Navajo follow the Anglo-American pattern, this insistence is frequently met with hostility and anxiety. But the anxiety is directed at an alien source, not at something in his own culture that "resists" use and manipulation.

Resistance to change among the Trappist monks. For centuries, the way of life of the Trappist monks has almost been synonymous with resistance to change. For example, their rule of silence, wherein one spoke primarily to superiors, lasted for 800 years; their liturgical language for 1400 years. Recently, however, especially with the Second Vatican Council of 1962-65 ('Vatican II'),the Trappists have been undergoing a new revolution, perhaps even a renewal. Latin is no longer the only

liturgical language, and in cases it is not used at all. The rule of silence has been sharply modified (i.e., it now pertains only to certain places and times). Numerous other changes are equally basic.

One American monastery, containing approximately 70 monks, will be the focus of the present discussion, since it is felt by some monks as perhaps being more in the forefront of change than most other Trappist monasteries. The monastery is given the fictious name of Our Lady of the Palisades. Being more open to change, the analyst is in a better position to see what is retained and thus what is particularly resistant to change.

It is interesting that the same complex of resistant variables as was found among the Navajo /are also found among the Trappists: Religion, sexual-familial patterns, physical isolation, and to some extent, language. Unlike the Navajo, however, in each case the reason for the resistance is different, and in several cases, the trait is at the same time a source of resistance and a source of change.

The monks are still Roman Catholics, of course. The Mass remains the center of their day. They come to the monastery because as Catholics they feel called to the monastery by their God (there are individual variations on this theme, but such at least are the ideal reasons for a monk being a Trappist).

The reasons for the present period of renewal are not simple, but there appear to be two dominant influences: changes that have developed within the separate monasteries as they live their daily lives as monks and changes that have developed within the Roman Catholic hierarchy. Where the distinction should be drawn exactly is not possible to say, but certainly long before Vatican II there were Abbots who were calling for a

"return to the sources," particularly to the Holy Scriptures and the Rule of St. Benedict (see Belorgey, 1952; Le Bail, n.d., but probably written during the 1920's or 1930's; and Kinsella, 1962, writing on Dom Lehodey, who wrote in the first decades of the twentieth century). Specifically in this particular monastery, Our Lady of the Palisades, changes in liturgy were occurring as early as 1958, particularly toward simplification. The Order as a whole even earlier was requiring novice masters and others to go to Rome for more formal training. Also modifications in the rules about fasting and reading of religious material were taking place quite apart from the reforms of Vatican II.

Nevertheless, Rome definitely had its impact. The changes that the monks themselves regard as most significant (according to a questionnaire that was distributed to those who had been in the monastery 15 years or more) all occurred after Vatican II (these changes included: greater emphasis on individual responsibility, installation of private rooms, change from Latin to English in the ritual, the modifications in the rule of silence, and a general increase in pluralism.) To be sure, causality is difficult to specify even here, because the changes were made possible by a new Abbot who was sympathetic to the directions the Church was taking. Perhaps the relationship is best expressed by one monk: "We had been in dialogue with Rome for some time before Vatican II, although possibly we were not always aware of it." Whatever, the influence of Rome cannot be disregarded.

In any case, the past years--and expecially the past four years, have been years of searching and experimentation. And recently, the Order of Trappist monks (the Order of Cistercians of the Strict Observance) as a

body is seeking to bring the experimentation back into more common channels. It follows that the monks were resistant to change, sought change, and currently seek somewhat to limit change because of the religious milieu of which they are a part, including both the formal religious hierarchy (Rome) and the local houses (the Abbey). Their religion is accordingly manifestly rather than latently involved in the change process.

Latin, the liturgical language of the Roman Church, has been virtually excluded from all of the religious offices at Palisades Abbey for several years. It has been brought back only recently in certain hymns used at some of the religious services, and Latin thus displays some vitality. With this exception, language is generally no longer an isolating factor with these monks. Nevertheless, it should be noted that an affiliate monastery of nearby nuns ("Trappistines") still retains much Latin in its liturgy (although this too is changing). As with the Navajo, the women tend to be more conservative.*

To speak of monastic familial patterns is also to speak of their absence. Although some allusion is made to kinship relations among the monks in terms of "father," or "brother," these terms are not looked upon by the monks, themselves, as expressing kinship relations. (There does, however, seem to be a closer connection with kinship, even if still heavily metaphorical, when the terms "mother," and "sister" are used by the nuns.) But if one can view celibacy as a method of dealing with kinship (and it does control sexual relations), then the monks are as resistant to change here almost as much as they ever were. One must say "almost," because

---

*As always, there are exceptions. For example, the nuns modified their religious costume (the "habit") sooner than did the monks.

many of the monks who have left have married, and one of these is attempting to start a religious community of married people. However, these are no longer monks. Celibacy is still the undisputed norm at this monastery, and women are not permitted to sleep in the guest house, although they may visit, as they did before the renewal of Vatican II.

Just as the Navajos have been isolated by their location, so are the monks. But the monks chose their location precisely because it helped to isolate them. They also enforce visiting rules such that visitors may come only at certain times, and when they do come, the visitors are restricted to designated places in the monastery (i.e., outside the "enclosure"). As with the Navajo, modern transportation is posing a problem, in that the city from which they were once fairly distant is now much closer because of hard-surfaced roads. Unlike the Navajo, however, these monks have made continued efforts to increase the isolation in which they live by stricter regulations on visitors, such as limiting the number who may stay overnight and eliminating casual sight-seeing tours.

There is an additional factor that isolates the monks, and this is their life style. Because of their white and black robes, their appearance is different. The monk's time of retiring is 8:00 p.m.; he rises at 3:15 a.m. And between the time of 8:00 p.m. and 6:30 a.m. he keeps what is referred to as the "Great Silence"--the one time when speaking is still not permitted. He may normally only eat with other monks (and this, too, in silence), not with visitors. Consequently, because most of the monks' lives are spent within the cloister (more officially, the monastic "enclosure") where visitors are not permitted, and because even within the cloister, a considerable segment of time is spent in silence, the monk is highly iso-

lated from the world outside. Unlike the Navajo, however, he reads periodicals which are in the world's language (English and French, in this case), and so although the world does not see him, he sees the world.

The monks differ from the Navajos in that they are not necessarily isolated from the outside world by different thought patterns. The discussion here must necessarily involve several world views: The secular, the active religious, and the contemplative religious. Although there is a barrier to communication between the seculars (those without any religious conviction) and the active religious, there are many religious people in the world outside of the monastery who have no difficulty in communicating with the monks. Within the monastery, there are roughly two types of monks (although all gradations between these two types may be found). There are at the one extreme those monks who believe that their calling is to be involved in the world although at the same time to be in this particular monastery. They may work in the guest house or in some business enterprise connected with the Abbey (and not all monks who do these things would be active religious). It is these monks in particular who have no barrier to communication with active religious people outside of the monastery.

At the other extreme is the contemplative. He shares a point of view which can be communicated only to those active religious people who are themselves contemplative (for the combination is quite possible). His position can be described (if only incompletely) by saying that he believes firmly in the importance of prayer over all other things, and he believes that direct communion with God is possible through prayer. He experiences this communion if not frequently (some do) then at least

significantly. No hallucination is involved. The monk believes that he communicates by means of his soul. In a word, he is a mystic.

The active who is not a contemplative finds the contemplative position incomprehensible. It is only the conviction of both that each has been called to the monastery by God that enables them to continue to live together. Some of the deeper conflicts within the monastery are between these two types.

The point is, that although a significant number of monks are contemplative and thus find communication with the outside world somewhat difficult, not all monks are contemplatives. Some are actives and thus there is no barrier between them and the outside.

The comparison of monks and Navajos would not be complete if it did not also emphasize the selective acculturation which the monks have with the outside. All of these men, of course, were born elsewhere, and so they carry changes from the outside with them into the monastery. Thus, the resistance to change can be more readily attributed to the social structure than to the culture. Further, there are numerous areas in which change has been readily accepted: Tractors are much more commonplace in the monastery than on the reservation. The monks are highly productive and skilled farmers--even industrialized ones. Neither radio nor television is used in the monastery (I have seen a television antenna jutting from a Navajo mud hogan!), but there are telephones, late model cars, slide projectors, high-fi sets, and a library of more than 11,000 volumes. In short, the monks are not opposed to adopting anything that they feel might help their monastic quest. And <u>within limits determined by their religion</u>, they adopt anything else which they feel will make life

more simple and peaceful. The resistance to change, here, is equally interesting. Several times during the course of the last five years, extremely expensive equipment, amounting to thousands and even tens of thousands of dollars, has been scrapped, rejected, or curtailed because it interfered with the dictates of their religious life. For example, an entire dairy herd has been abandoned because the monks felt that the labor and the schedule of milking made demands that were in conflict with their prayer life. Similar abandonment of chicken farming, a winery, and an electrical generating power station were made because of essentially religious demands, and the operation of an alfalfa dehydration plant has been cut in half. On the other hand, thousands of dollars were spent converting from dormitories to private rooms because this gave more time for privacy, prayer, and meditation. Further, the farm operations have been extensively mechanized because of the greater control and saving of time that is a result. The present schedules of the monks involve approximately four hours a day (six days a week) in some productive work and three hours a day in liturgical prayer. The remaining time is spent reading, meditating, in silent prayer and in attending to the necessities of life (eating, sleeping, etc.)

Attention is now turned specifically to the communal organization of the monastery, for although this type of community lacks the family, and although it is more purposive than normal communities, it resembles them more than it does other types of social organizations (Hillery, 1969, 1971). As mentioned, the monastery is spatially isolated by choice, because the monks have chosen to withdraw from the world. For this reason, their settlement pattern is clustered, compact, and permanent (unlike the more scattered and shifting pattern of the Navajo). Boundaries are definite

rather than vague, to keep the world outside. The base of operations of the monks' routine activities is sharply restricted for the same reason, and similarly, he must come from outside the system as a new member. All of these spatial patterns are basic to monastic life, and all of them have shown a high degree of resistance to change. They are not apt to change in the future.

Celibacy has been mentioned, but with celibacy come also two other institutions that are made necessary by it and are crucial to the maintenance of the monastery as a communal organization: recruitment and discharge. Although there has been much experimentation with ways of integrating the new recruit into the monastic routine, there has been no change in the way in which the monk is recruited. The monk is a Catholic, and he learns of the Trappists in general and this monastery in particular through his activities as a practicing Catholic. This feature is unlikely to change, simply because the monks themselves do no recruiting, nor are they likely to. The basic attitude they express is that God will see to it that recruits come, if it is God's will that they come. Their attitude is not fatalistic--they are concerned. But their concern expresses itself in the form of prayer and in their behavior in reference to the new candidate when he comes into the monastery. The monk believes that each new monk must be there because of a call from God, or he should not be there at all. How the call comes, how the aspiring monk knows that the call is from God, is up to the individual to experience. The task of the other monks is to assess whether they believe the applicant will be able to integrate himself into the life of the community (and whether they will integrate with him).

The other institution made necessary by the lack of a family is the institution of discharge, and this also remains basically unchanged. At some point in the career of the aspirant monk (whether observer, postulant, novice, or simple professed), he may himself decide to leave. Or, at some other point, the time may come for the monks to vote on whether he should be accepted into a particular stage (postulant, novice, etc.). This is done by a secret ballot from the community. Neither is this likely to change.

Although the recruiting function remains unchanged because of the monk's religious values, the institution of discharge does not change both because of religious and communal values. The monk that does not exhibit proper religious values or proper concern for his fellow monks would be asked to leave, although rarely is this ever done. Most often, the neophyte himself becomes convinced that this particular monastery is not suitable for him, and he goes elsewhere. This freedom to leave is basic to the communal nature of monastic organization, for it would only require a deprivation of this freedom to turn the monastery into a prison. As it is, the monks are in no sense prisoners (Hillery, 1971).

The cooperative structure, finally, is as it ever was. The monks receive no wages. In this monastery, the monk may have a few private possessions, limited to what is in his room. But even then, he has these possessions ultimately at the sufferance of the Abbot, and neither his room nor his clothes nor anything else in the monastery really belongs to him. It belongs to the community of monks.

To be sure, there has been change even in this institution of religious communism. For example, the monks have moved from stalls in a dormitory to private rooms (which at least one of the monks referred to as "scandalous").

But for the monk to conceive of this room as his own private property, to which he had legal and disposable rights, would be quite foreign. He may and indeed does think of his room as "his," but no more than a professor regards his office as "his," if that.

In a real sense, then, the monastery resists change to some extent precisely because it is a communal organization as well as because it is a religious culture, and it resists because it is a religious culture that is expressed in terms of a communal organization. Culturally, the monk is open to change because of forces in the world around him, which include the culture in which he formerly lived as well as the culture of his religion.* He resists change largely because of his religion. Probably, however, the more correct expression would be that he directs his change. Resistance would be a part of this direction.**

But the monk is open to change and resists change because he also lives in a certain type of communal organization. He is open to change as technology facilitates certain activities he deems desirable--always in terms of his religious commitment. He is closed to change because his

---

*It should also be noted that this culture embraces both the formal organization (the Roman Catholic hierarchy, including the monk's Order) and the communal organization (the local monastery). Each of these figures in change differently.

**On reading the foregoing paragraph, one monk said: "Man as centered in Spirit rests in the Stillness which lies behind all changing appearances, and out of that Stillness [he] critiques, effects, rejects, or accepts change (whether personal, communal, or cultural change)."

particular community requires that he separate himself from the world, spatially, sexually, and in the manner in which he cooperates.

Comparison of Navajos and Monks. First, each of these people show resistance to change both because of their culture and because of the nature of their communal organization. But each is also highly open to change in both areas. Resistance to change is then very selective, not only with respect to what is accepted but with respect to the "mechanisms" or functions that are involved. More simply: both Navajos and Monks accept some things and reject others, and they allow parts of their lives to be involved in this change but they do not allow others.

In reference to acceptance of change, both peoples show that rural Gemeinschaftlich systems can exist effectively with industrial technology. Thus, material traits generally show the least resistance to change, ideas and values the most. Both show that the core to resistance to change is found in the religious, in the sexual-familial, and (for an earlier period among the monks) in the language systems.

But the similarities must be examined more closely, for although they are truly similarities in many cases (and this should not be forgotten), there are important differences. For each comparison, the similarities will be mentioned first, followed by the differences.

It should be borne in mind that change among the Navajos has been largely undirected and unplanned by themselves, whereas change for the monks has been and is being carefully thought out in many areas. For both, however, the more important reasons for the resistance may be traced to their religion. Again, the religion differs markedly. Navajos are pantheists; monks are monotheists. (Whatever one may say about Catholic saints, monks believe very much in the unity of the Holy Trinity of Father,

Son, and Holy Spirit, and there is little evidence of hagiolatry. The only "competitor" is the Virgin Mary, and she essentially receives her sanctity because of her inseparable involvement with the Trinity.)

Both peoples are ordinarily born into their religion. Again, there is a difference: the Navajo grows into his religious involvement. Never does he have to make a personal commitment. The monk, however, must decide at a certain time in his life (no younger than 20 years of age) that he will become a monk in a specific Order at a specific monastery.

The sexual-familial patterns are highly resistant to change. But the Navajo hardly thinks of them (compare Dyk, 1938)--they are as natural as breathing. The monk consciously chooses to commit his life to one of celibacy and from all familial attachments. For many monks this commitment is something that must be faced anew repeatedly for most of the rest of his life. It would be an understatement to say that women pose problems for monks. After years in the monastery, many monks leave because they feel that they should no longer make this commitment.

Probably language is least similar among the five traits discussed here. Navajos are isolated because their language is so different from that of Anglo-Americans that communication will always present problems, as long as Navajos speak Athabascan. On the other hand, Latin was something which previously isolated the monks from the outside world (particularly the laity), but only as far as their liturgy was concerned. Now that Latin is gone, so is the isolation, with the only possible exception that words still have a different meaning to the monk: "Host," "Father," Jesus Christ, Holy Spirit, the Church--all mean something different to the committed monk than they do to those who have not committed their lives to Christ. But the monk adds an even greater lexicon: Cloister,

novitiate, refectory, retreat, Office, abbot general, loi cadre, canonical hours, cenobitic, chapter, common observance, contemplative, active, concelebrated mass, enclosure, father immediate, garth, general chapter, hebdomadary, indult, lay brother, lectio divina, night office, oblate, octave, postulant, prior--these are only a few terms which are in the monks' daily life. They are generally not understood in the same sense by the outside world, and often not even by other Roman Catholics. However, the monks will probably retain this specialized language (not to mention the sign language that is used in places and times where silence must be kept) because of their isolation. The language, itself, is thus a consequence rather than a determinant of isolation.

The trait of isolation is at the same time both a cultural and a social factor in resistance to change. Navajos are isolated as a consequence of other factors, and they do not actively promote it. The monks however, actively promote isolation because they feel that it is part of their call from God. Thus, Navajos live separated from one another and from outsiders because they were originally a hunting and then a pastoral people. Monks are clustered together so that they maycare for one another as they live out their lives of prayer and separation from the world.

The Navajos hardly think of their cooperative structures as something to preserve--one goes to his mother's people for help because that is the thing to do; he feeds everyone at ceremonies again because his culture has mapped this out for him already; and so the medicine man is paid; and now so are goods purchased from the white man.

The monk purposely leaves a world of contractual obligations and enters a world where he has no possessions of his own, where almost all that he does is part of a system of mutual aid. The only contractual

features of monastic life are to be found in the division of labor: Abbot, prior, priest, brother, and baker; librarian, guestmaster, cook, etc. Nor are these contractual in the same sense as in the outside world, because there is no remuneration.

Again we turn to the distinction between cultural and communal perspectives introduced at the beginning of this paper. It is important to realize that these five traits do not exist as unorganized congeries. Religon is inseparable from the language which expresses it, and family, space, and cooperative patterns exist together in a complex that can appropriately be thought of as a type of community system. Indeed, one can go farther: For the monks, their religion justifies their communal practices, and their language is the principle vehicle of this functioning network. For the Navajo, one has to give greater emphasis to the kinship system, expecially the matrilineal clan which extends beyond the local "vill," i.e., beyond the outfit or camp. Nothing "justifies" anything in Navajo culture. Rather, the religious needs serve to tie camps together as patients utilize their matrilineal clan structures in obtaining the required services. Once more, language is the principle vehicle. For the Navajo, however, language serves even more to reinforce this complex of functional relationships by isolating them from competing or potentially disruptive practices.

The foregoing synthesis is a necessary part of maintaining a general perspective in a discussion that is necessarily involved. In spite of the utility of synthesis, however, it is also necessary to continue to focus on the separate parts, since it is impossible to speak of everything at once. When each of the five traits are compared, religion is seen to emerge as a powerful force in resistance, if not the most powerful.

One is likely to forget the importance of religion when he views either theapparently large degree of religious apathy in the modern world or when he is viewing people who have very similar religious (or anti-religious) views to his own. Nevertheless, when comparing these two radically different people, one cannot lose sight of the fact that they selectively acculturate largely because of their religious beliefs. The people themselves may not recognize this, as the Navajos generally do not; or they may be highly conscious of it, as the monks are; but in either case, the religious belief is a central reason for being.

Language is ranked after religion because the experience of the monks demonstrates how radically a change can be effected, though Latin continued as the liturgical language for fourteen centuries. For the Navajo, the resistance power of language seems powerful, indeed. It may in fact be equally strong for the monks, though this may not be as apparent precisely because an English-speaking person is preparing this analysis.

We in the social and behavioral sciences are constantly losing and finding Sigmund Freud, but the present analysis can do nothing but uphold the importance that he has given to sex. Again, whether consciously or unconsciously, positively or negatively, sex and its consequences form a massive barrier to the introduction of change. By "consequences" one should include both child-rearing and celibacy. And one should also note that women are slower to change. It is not the fashion today to say such things,and I must here go on record as in basic sympathy with women's liberation. But contrary to the extreme position taken by some in "women's lib," there is a fundamental difference between the sexes, and this difference finds its way into social and cultural patterns. Whether the difference "should" be there is something else.

Just as cultural and biological factors have entered into this social analysis, so do ecological ones. It still takes energy to move from one place to another, and physical distance can be resistant to change. But that ecology (as with sex) is not the final determinant can be seen by the fact that one can isolate himself even when distance has been largely eliminated, as with the monks.

Norms of cooperation are still very poorly understood. We have done most with contractual cooperation, probably because of its close association with formal organization (which has shown the most intensive development in sociology). But the basic patterns of cooperation that are found within families and in systems of mutual aid have been given very little attention, even recently. We probably know more about conflict. Nevertheless, the present analysis raises important questions here. Are the practices of mutual aid among the Navajo a source of their resistance to change? Is this true also of the monks? We only know that these practices continue to exist, and that their importance is probably not completely recognized by both peoples.

Perhaps related here may be the lack of effective institutions for conflict resolution among both peoples. (It should be noted here that I do not place conflict and cooperation in opposition--a man may fight with his beloved and still love her.) Neither the monks nor the Navajos have developed effective ways in which conflicts may be acted out and in which the basis for the conflicts may be resolved. Among both there is a norm that stipulates that conflicts are to be avoided. Conflicts do occur among both, of course. The levels of intensity are usually low: disagreements, arguments expressing tension or antagonism--the monks admit that these occur. Among the Navajo, such occurrences at least are rare.

I have never heard shouting arguments in either case (except from drunken Navajos--see below).

It is perhaps extremely significant then, in the absence of conflict resolution systems, that withdrawal is used as one type of solution to conflict among both monks and Navajos (not to mention Professors!). When a monk or Navajo can no longer avoid quarrels with his fellows, he leaves (and monks even withdraw to some extent in the monastery by avoiding contact with the potential opponent). Navajos have an additional mechanism through the use of alcohol--the act of having taken a drink is often used as as excuse for conflict. The monks, on the other hand, quite often use the Abbot as a way of resolving conflict (but probably not often enough). At one time, the monks had an institution called the Chapter of Faults, in which various monks accused ("proclaimed") other monks of deviant behavior. The accused, however, was not allowed to protect himself. The effectiveness of this institution is unknown, other than the monks have now dropped it. From my conversations with them, it apparently was never popular.

The lack of procedures for conflict resolution may be more serious among the Navajo than among the monks, for an abbot can effectively provide a substitute. Conflict resolution, however, can act in either of two opposing ways in the change process. First, the absence of a conflict resolution system makes change more likely, in the sense of increasing the possibility of the disintegration of the system. From only imperfect knowledge of other Trappist monasteries, it is my impression that those monasteries with more authoritarian abbots ("strong" rulers) have been more conservative. (Cf. T. Merton, 1956, Raymond, 1949.)

On the other hand, the lack of a conflict resolution system may also be a resistant to change in that some potential changes may never be discussed, because to do so may be thought to be a "sensitive" area, and in the "interest of peace," confrontation is avoided.

Conclusion. One should recall that this discussion does not intend to present final answers. Its main purpose is to raise questions. In this vein, of the various resistants to change that have been discussed, the following order may be proposed, in which the most important is listed first: Religion, sex, language, space, and cooperation. The evidence for religion being a resistant is quite extensive and is in general agreement with the basic principle that opinions, attitudes, and values change more slowly than overt behavior (Berelson and Steiner, 1962). At the other pole, the role of cooperative practices in social change is exceedingly hazy.

Of course, these five factors are not the only resistants to change. They were merely the ones that emerged as most conspicuous from a comparison of two widely divergent rural people. For example, little mention is made of formal organization of the monks--the Catholic hierarchy and the Order of the Cistercians of the Strict Observance--because we are dealing with common factors in resistance to change. The Navajo have virtually no formal organization (the existence of a political organization for the so-called tribe is an Anglo-American creation and is hardly a part of Navajo culture).

But it is religion which shows the most interesting theoretical possibilities. Not only is it apparently the most powerful factor in the collection, but it also acts as a director that influences all of the other traits. The power of religion as a director of resistance is more apparent among the monks, but it suggests strongly that battles over social change ultimately must be fought in the realm of ideas. Here Parsons' hypothesis of the cybernetic principle of social change is confirmed.

Parsons (1966) maintained that certain symbolic cultural traits (language would be included here), and e pecially religion, acted as a sort of master gatekeeper for other developments in the change process. The principle is analagous to that of computers: a small input of energy if properly channeled can be responsible for enormous outputs of energy in other parts of the system. We have here shown the reverse: blocking actions by religion can equally forestall outputs of energy in other areas.

In stressing the importance of religious symbols, however, we should not be seduced into making an unnecessary contrast: if ideas are most important, it does not follow that material traits are least important. As long as sex and space are important resistants, then change is never exclusively ideational.

REFERENCES

Becker, Howard

1950 Through Values to Social Interpretation. Durham, N. C.: Duke Univ.

Belorgey, Dom Godefroid, O.C.S.O.

1952 The Practice of Mental Prayer. Westminster, Md.: The Newman Press.

Benedict, Saint

530? The Holy Rule. Edited by The Benedictines of St. Meinrad's Abbey. St. Meinrad, Ind.:. The Abbey Press, 1937.

Berelson, Bernard and Gary A. Steiner

1964 Human Behavior: An Inventory of Scientific Findings. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc.

Berry, Brewton

1951 Race Relations. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co.

Cuzzort, R. P.

1969 Humanity and Modern Sociological Thought. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.

Eaton, Joseph W.

1952 "Controlled acculturation: A survival technique of the Hutterites." American Sociological Review 17 (June):331-340.

Dyk, Walter (recorder)

1938 Son of Old Man Hat: A Navaho Autobiography. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc.

Hill, W. W.

1938 "The agricultural and hunting methods of the Navaho Indians." Yale University Publications in Anthropology, No. 18, New Haven.

Hillery, George A., Jr.

1963 "Villages, cities, and total institutions." American Sociological Review 28 (October):779-791.

Hillery, George A., Jr.

1966 "Navajos and eastern Kentuckians: A comparative study in the cultural consequences of the demographic transition." American Anthropologist 68 (February):52-70.

1968 Communal Organizations: A Study of Local Societies. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

1969 "The convent: Community, prison, or task force?" Journal for Scientific Study of Religion 8 (Spring):140-151.

1971 "Freedom and social organization: A comparative analysis." American Sociological Review 36 (February):51-65.

Kinsella, Nivard, O.C.S.O.

1962 Flight and Pursuit: The Mission of Dom Vital Lehodey. Dublin: Gill & Son.

Kluckhon, Clyde

1962 Collected Essays of Clyde Kluckhon: Culture and Behavior. Edited by Richard Kluckhon. New York: The Free Press of Glencoe.

Kluckhon, Clyde and Dorothea Leighton

1962 The Navaho. Revised edition. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co.

LeBail, Dom Anselme, O.C.S.O.

n.d. "The Spiritual Ideas Contained in the Rule of St. Benedict: A Synthesis of Doctrine." unpublished manuscript on file at the Abbey of Our Lady of the Palisades.

Merton, Robert K.

1968 Social Theory and Social Structure. New York: The Free Press.

Merton, Thomas

1953 The Sign of Jonas. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co.

Parsons, Talcott

1966 Societies: Evolutionary and Comparative Perspectives. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Raymond, M.

1964 Burnt Out Incense. New York: Benziger Bros., Inc.

Sorokin, Pitirim A.

1937-41 Social and Cultural Dynamics. New York: American Book Co., 4 vols.